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A Suburb in the Making

West Vancouver

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF
JOHN ALEXANDER & CO.

1942



KEY MAP





FOREWORD



GLANCE at the sketch map will show the position of West Vancouver. It was formerly part of the North Vancouver district and became a separate municipality in 1912. The distance from the city to Hollyburn wharf is now covered by ferry boat in twenty minutes; and to Dundarave, about a mile farther west where another wharf will now be built, in thirty minutes.

As the City of Vancouver grows, the residential districts that now border the business district will be absorbed by it. The man who desires to live in a residential neighborhood will then have to choose whether he will suffer the discomfort of a forty minute ride on a crowded street car, or make the journey from his home to the city in twenty minutes by ferry boat.

The investor should remember that West Vancouver is bounded by the sea and mountains. In

other words, the area of the municipality that offers homesites of the first class to Vancouver's more prosperous citizens is comparatively small. Therefore, the best lots in this suburb will advance in value with the growth of a prosperous population. The man who buys residential lots in suburbs east and south of the city probably buys the homesites of wage-earners, and the future value of these homesites is limited by the rent that the average wage earner can afford to pay.

In estimating the future prosperity of West Vancouver, the activity that has begun in North Vancouver must not be overlooked. Industry and commerce are building another city on the north shore. It is evident to the most careless observer that the citizens will build their homes on that portion of the north shore that is outside the harbor, and likely to remain free from the smoke and dirt that accompany an industrial invasion.



*The
Marine Drive
Towards
Point
Atkinson*

A SUBURB IN THE MAKING

Two years ago the settlers in our district were regarded as pioneers who scorned wealth and bore privation cheerfully for love of beauty. Summer visitors to our shore felt that they had left luxury behind, and set themselves to prove that they could endure the hardships of the wilderness with the fortitude of their forefathers. The links with civilization were broken; there were no telephones, no postmen, and no railway trains. The water that they drank came from a stream in the forest; the strangers who met them on the road wished them good-day. Everything was primitive and barbarous. They returned to the city exultant; and, after the fashion of explorers, told strange tales of adventure to entertain their friends. There they were assured of a respectful hearing, for it was generally known that the coast between Vancouver and Alaska was picturesque, and there were optimists even in those days who ventured to predict that, some day in the distant future, Hollyburn would be a fashionable summer resort.

To be different is to be tempted by comfort; so there are some of us who watch the invasion of West Vancouver regretfully. In 1910, men and women who had ventured up the narrows on a blustering winter morning, stepped from the small boat in conscious bravery. If city people imagined that we had risked our lives we did not relieve them of their timidity and ignorance; we smiled patronizingly, and went upon our way with our heads in the air. Now there are larger boats, and everybody knows that they are more comfortable than street cars; beavies of girls carrying lunch baskets migrate to our district on holidays, and seem to be merrily unconscious of danger. Some of our glory has passed into history; who can blame us if we wonder whether progress may not be bought at too high a price? But our grumblers are good fellows, and at heart they are glad that all these strangers have begun to find the beauty that we discovered long ago.



*Looking
West
from
D.L. 554*

The lazy comfort of a summer evening often works miracles on a point of view; in the warm dusk, real estate agents and advertising men are no longer modern; they appear to be effete. Pre-historic man consulted wizards and witch doctors before the tribe moved to a fresh glade in the forest, and the desire for guidance seems to be inherent in our natures. Probably the witch doctor was a blatant and insistent person; he would point to the new townsite and explain volubly why it was the most desirable residential district that had ever been offered to the homeseeker who hoped for family joys and a serene old age. The people enjoyed listening to his advice, and when they took it he demanded suitable remuneration; the familiar formula: quarter cash; balance, six, twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months: is an echo from the age when debts were paid in kind. The men brought in pelts and furs in winter, and the women helped with the summer payments by gathering roots and berries in the forest thickets. The real estate agent of those days was physician and law-giver; in this age of specialization the organized

professions have imposed regulations upon the imaginations of those who practise them, and the charm of the unexpected is sometimes lost. Think of waiting in the consulting room in dreadful apprehension that your physician was about to prescribe a potion that had been brewed in a witch's caldron in the dark of the moon; a delicious medicine would seem unpalatable to a kind hearted man who believed that one of its indispensable ingredients was the blood of a blue-eyed child. You can imagine your thrill of delight when you were ordered to carry a rabbit's foot in your left hip pocket, and dismissed with the assurance that you would be quite well in a day or two. The professions have lost much of the humor of life by the curtailment of personal liberty; but the real estate agent is still free. He tells his story as it was told five thousand years ago. If he secures the attention of the tribe by placing manikins and mechanical toys in his office window, no one worries him by pointing out that his conduct breaks the rules of professional etiquette; and, if he has lived on the Pacific Coast, his clients have frequently credited him with the

A SUBURB IN



HOLLYBURN, WE

N THE MAKING



WEST VANCOUVER



*Dundarave,
Looking
East*

gift of prophecy when, in fact, he had merely exercised a pleasing optimism in depicting unexpected glories in the future.

Time will bring changes to our district, but the best of our heritage must remain with us. We do not often find deer tracks on the Keith Road in these days; the giant tree that stood sentry on the golf links has gone the way of its older friends. The sunshine that warms us in the winter time, too often finds the city wrapped in fog. We shall keep the sunshine; our slopes are spread towards the south, and the winds blow upon them from the mountains or from the sea. But it is in summer that we exultantly proclaim the happiness of our lot. Outside the harbor there is freedom from racking noises and insistent city smells; the heat of offices and work rooms is not so grave a matter when we know that in an hour or two we shall watch the shores of Stanley Park slip by as we pass into the cleaner atmosphere of home. Business worries do not follow through the Narrows; and if they did, they would surely suffer from neglect. How can a man remember business when he is

afraid that he has forgotten one of the things that his wife ordered from town? If he owns a business and is himself ownerless, his evenings are necessarily filled by anxieties for the betterment of his condition. His attention may be diverted by tennis or boating, but business is too trivial for serious thought.

There are many advantages in being able to think of a district six miles wide as home. Some of the prosperous residents of cities do not get home until they step out of the elevators of apartment houses; and an apartment house is a collection of imitations or small working models. The tenant of a suite puts flowers in the window boxes and tries to imagine that she has a garden; she uses hanging baskets to hide the view. Her husband is inclined to stray in the evenings; and she cannot keep a dog. If she has been brought up in the country, she lies awake on still nights listening to the noises of the city. She has been accustomed to hear friendly sounds break upon the silence; in the dark stable her pet horse nickered softly to his neighbor, and on the bed ground by the orchard fence a cow



*Gordon
Road*

that knew and liked her gave a long wheezing sigh of contentment. The shunting of a distant train or the whirr of a late automobile speeding for home, are not interesting; and even the policemen who pass every night are strangers. Her hope of happiness seems to lie in the new suburb. Friends remind her that it is far from the best stores, and, when she declares that she is glad of it, they shake their heads sorrowfully. Her husband suggests that they should wait for the promised improvement in transportation, and, perhaps for the first time in her life, she argues wisely of the increase in values. He decides to look into the matter from a cold-blooded, business point of view; so on Saturday he tramps a muddy, new-made road unconscious of leading strings. He buys and remains in ignorance. In a few months, when the new house is ready, he finds that he is her comrade in a series of adventures that are delightfully reminiscent of their honeymoon.

There was a time when the man who bought a lot in West Vancouver felt that he was about to emigrate to a frontier settlement, and he began to

practise a resolve to meet the commiseration of his friends manfully; but he was not long in finding that a ferry boat is as convenient as a street car, and that the new country holds compensations. The concerts at the school house are sometimes surprisingly good; the builders of homes practise an old fashioned hospitality that scorns ceremonies and makes a new friendship fit as snugly as a worn glove. Neighborliness is said to be unnecessary in the city; if a man finds acquaintances in business who share his faith in patriotism and his theory regarding original sin, he satisfies his gregarious instinct by seeking their company when occasion offers. In the new suburb we are all upon an adventure, and we have learned that nothing has so much of the quality of buried treasure as the queer kinds of goodness that may be discovered in the stranger next door. A man is accustomed to accept the goodness of his friends in the spirit in which he receives payment of an old debt, but when he finds a likeable thing in an enemy, or in a stranger, he is tempted to look again lest there be other things that he has missed. Thus, the suburban



D. L.
554



DUNDARAVE

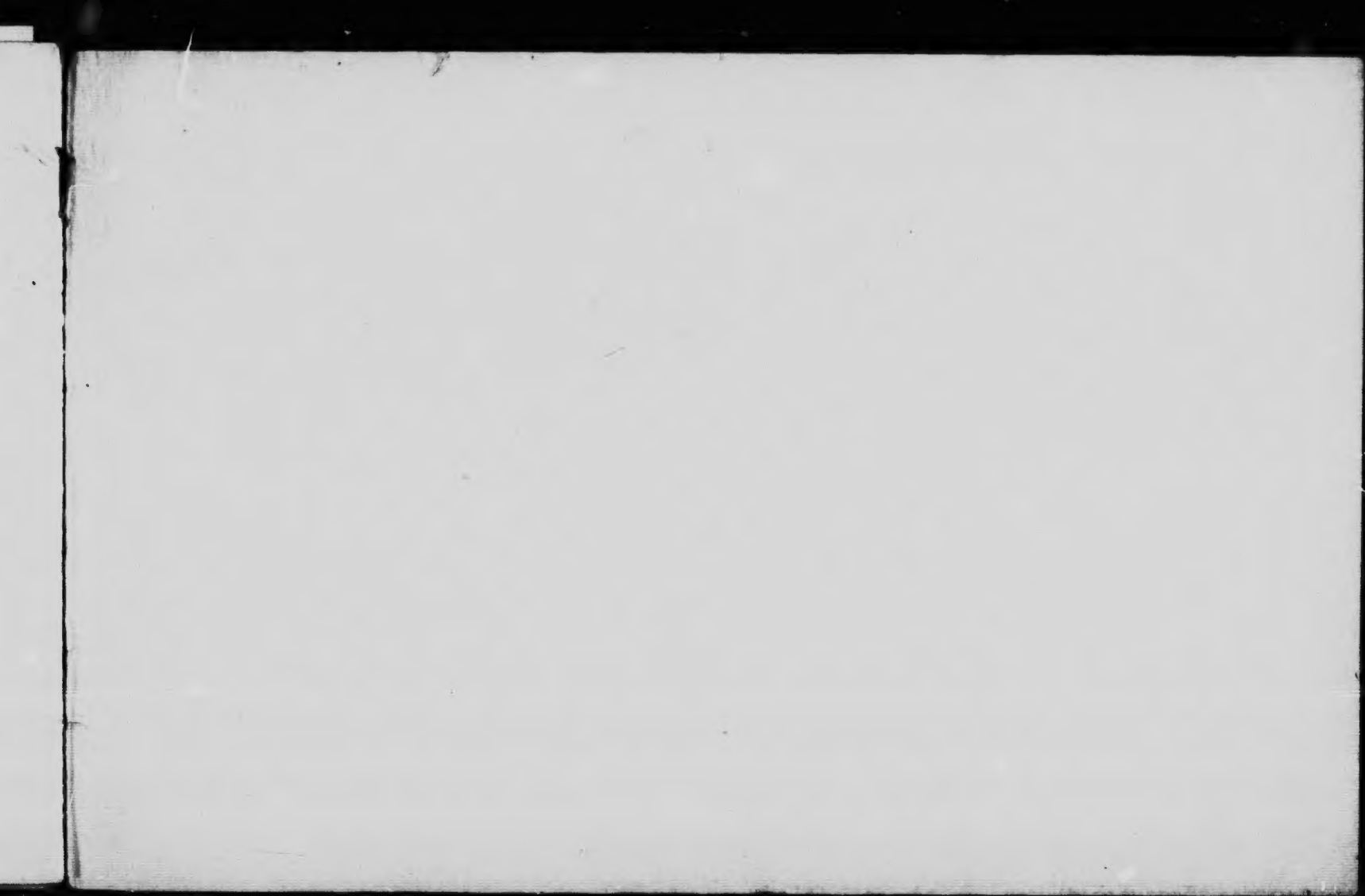
community is more closely knit; for, while cliques and parties may continue to cherish old illusions, the individuals who compose them are unable to remain in ignorance of the fact that their opponents love children and roses just as sincerely as wiser men. We build our faith in the future of West

Vancouver upon neighborliness; here, there will be no question of partizan policies nor of private greed, for the welfare of each citizen depends upon a desire to preserve and to enhance the pleasantness of homes.

R. P. MATHESON.



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